CIA damage

To the Editor:

I commend The Inquirer on the Aug. 4 editorial — "If All Are Not Punished — Should None Be Punished."

According to the Rockefeller Commission Report, the CIA began to survey mail between the United States and the Soviet Union in 1953. Some mail was opened and the activity ultimately involved "opening of many letters and the analyses of envelopes or 'covers' of a great many more letters."

This was approved by the director of the CIA and the record shows that Postmasters General Summerfield, Day and Blount were informed of this program as was Attorney General Mitchell. The FBI was also aware and received 57,000 items from it.

A 1962 CIA memorandum indicates the agency was aware that the mail openings would be viewed as violating criminal laws prohibiting obstruction or delay of mail.

The Rockefeller Commission recommendation was that "the President should instruct the director of the CIA that the CIA is not to engage in domestic mail openings except with express statutory authority in time of war."

A slap on the wrist. Any private citizen who tampered with the mails would be liable to a stiff jail sentence and fine.

Since I was personally under surveillance by the CIA, even though spying on American citizens was illegal, I find it particularly odious that those who spied on me and my organization have not been punished.

It is for this reason that I have joined in a class action against government agencies and communication agencies which allegedly spied upon me and my organization.

There is no way to repair the damage of government lawlessness except by punishing all of those who participated regardless of their high or low position in government agencies or in private industry.

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